

FACT CHECK:

The Truth about the Reckless “Defense of Democracies” TV Ad

Reckless claims made in the ad...	The Truth
<p>“Midnight. February 16th. The law that lets intelligence agencies intercept Al-Qaeda communications . . . expires.”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The extension, called the Protect America Act expired, leaving the original 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act still intact. [Letter from House Intelligence Committee Chairman Silvestre Reyes to President Bush, 2.14.08] 2. Additionally, authority granted under the Protect America Act continues for an additional year to ensure Americans are well-protected. [Reyes, 2.14.08]
<p>“Senate Democrats and Republicans vote overwhelmingly to extend terrorist surveillance.”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Months earlier, the House passed the RESTORE Act, which also extended surveillance of terrorist targets <u>without</u> granting retroactive immunity to lawbreaking telecom companies. [Blue Stem Prairie, 11.15.07] 2. The Senate bill provides retroactive immunity to telecommunications companies for participating in President’s illegal wiretapping efforts. [Washington Post, 2.16.08]
<p>“But the House refuses to vote and instead goes on vacation.”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The House rejected an extension to the temporary Protect America Act. [Roll no. 54, 191-229] 2. The House balked at retroactive immunity to telecommunications companies and sought to work out the differences between the Senate bill and the House-passed RESTORE Act. [Washington Post, 2.16.08] 3. Walz called upon President Bush and Congressional leadership to put aside partisan differences and remain in Washington to work out a new bill. [Walz, 2.13.08]
<p>“So new surveillance against terrorists is crippled.”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Today, the National Security Agency has the authority to conduct surveillance in at least three different ways, all of which provide strong capability to monitor the communications of possible terrorists.” [Reyes, 2.14.08]
<p>“Tell Tim Walz that Congress must do its job and pass the Senate’s terrorist surveillance bill to keep us all safe.”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Walz did his job by challenging his colleagues to stay in Washington and work out a long-term, bipartisan solution. [Walz, 2.13.08] 2. We have been, and continue to be protected by our nation’s intelligence gathering agencies who are using the 1978 FISA law and existing authority granted under the Protect America Act to keep us safe. [NY Times, 2.14.08] 3. Yesterday, House and Senate Democrats met to work out a compromise. Republicans and the White House refused to come to the table. [Pelosi 2.22.08]
<p>Photo of Congressman Tim Walz. Caption: “Tell Rep. Tim Walz. 507-206-0643</p>	